

The Gospel Messenger,

AND

SOUTHERN EPISCOPAL REGISTER.

Vol. XI.

AUGUST, 1834.

No. 128.

FOR THE GOSPEL MESSANGER.

LECTURES OF A PASTOR,

Addressed to the Candidates for the rite of Confirmation.

Lecture V.—The Advantages of Confirmation.

In a former Lecture it was remarked, that in the ordinance we are considering, the partaker ratified and confirmed the promises made at baptism, and also that our heavenly father ratified and confirmed his exceeding great and precious promises which were made on the same occasion of baptism. The title implies a "confirmation" of the covenant on the part, as of men, *so of God also*, and hence we are told in one of the prayers, that this sign of the "laying on of hands," is "to certify them of God's favour and gracious goodness towards them." To be certified of God's favour, in this impressive manner, by an outward sign of his appointment; to have ratified to us, in a manner so expressive, those divine promises of pardon, grace, and glory, which were first made to us at our baptism, cannot but be consoling and encouraging to the soul. It reminds us of the address of our Lord to the sick man, "Son be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee;" of the voice from the most excellent glory, when our Lord was confirmed by the dove lighting upon him, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and of the divine message brought by Ananias, when *putting his hands* on Saul, he said, "Brother, the Lord hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost." Was it a satisfaction and a cause for pious gratitude to Paul, to the palsied man, and to our blessed Saviour, to be thus certified of God's favour towards them, and shall not we be glad and grateful to have a like assurance both as to the matter and the manner? Is it not a great advantage of the "laying on of hands," and a great motive to seek it, that herein the most valuable spiritual blessings, are visibly signed and sealed to the faithful recipient? As to the *appropriateness* of the particular sign used in this ordinance it may be remarked that the "laying on of hands" was, in ancient times and still is, in various countries, a mode of expressing kind feeling towards the individual immediately concerned. With this view it has been used by a father to his children and elders to their juniors. Thus we read, Jacob, when he blessed Manassah and Ephraim, his grandsons, laid his hands upon them; our Saviour when he took the little children into his arms, laid his

hands upon them and blessed them ; in Patmos, on St. John, he laid his right hand saying unto him "fear not;" and Ananias, when he went to relieve Saul, first put his hands on him, as a token of his merciful errand. The Almighty has been pleased to consecrate this sign to his service, (just as he has the sign of water in baptism, and of bread and wine in the holy communion,) to make it the medium of testifying *his* good will; and we may add, that it is the general experience of mankind that declarations made in this manner, by outward signs, which speak through the eyes, and not through the ears, are much more impressive than words, the more usual mode of communication, can be. The sign, in the present instance, has been well denominated, "the natural expression of affectionate benediction." But let it be borne in mind, the expression is made by our heavenly father himself, though it comes through the medium of his chief minister, the bishop ; and the benediction is to be traced up through the agent, to the divine head of the Church himself.

To those who *confess* Christ before men, there is a special promise, that he will confess them also before his father in heaven. It is obvious to remark that the ordinance we are recommending, is not merely a virtual, but a formal public confession of faith in Christ, and a renunciation of all other masters over the conscience. The partaker, therefore, brings himself within the scope of this special promise, having performed the condition, and under circumstances which we cannot doubt must be divinely approved—after due deliberation, and preparation to do it understandingly and solemnly, in the presence of the Church and the angels who are about that sacred society, and usually at that season of youth, when there is least ground of suspicion of sinister motive ; that season which appears to have especially engaged the regard of our blessed Lord when he was on the earth. See to it then, that you make a "good confession," as before Pontius Pilate did your Lord, and as your hope will be well founded, so your reward will be certain.

The beneficial influence of the rite of Confirmation, considered as an act of *self dedication to God*, is evident. Who has not experienced the effect on his conduct of a settled resolution, of a fixed determination of mind, even when it has been privately entered into, and in relation to a matter of minor importance ? A resolution, on the most important of subjects, against vice, and in favour of virtue, fortified by the fears and hopes of eternity, entered into at the most susceptible period of life, ratified under the most solemn circumstances in the presence of angels and men, and God himself in his holy temple, may it not be reasonably expected that such a resolution so formed will be especially operative both as a check on sin and an incentive to holiness in heart and life ? Of this character was the resolution of Josiah. We read, he "went up into the house of the Lord, and all the people both small and great ; and he stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies and his statutes, with all the heart and all the souls." And what was the result ? We are told "like unto him was there no king before him that turned to the Lord with all his

heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses, neither after him arose there any like him." Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the divine authority and the expediency of Confirmation, so far as this custom involves a voluntary dedication to the divine service, it is very generally approved by Christians. The celebrated Adam Clarke, a *Methodist*, bears this testimony in its favour. "I felt much satisfaction in this ordinance, to me it was very solemn, and the *whole* was well conducted. I have lived nearly forty years since, and upon *this point* my sentiments are not changed." In an act of self-dedication to God, the Rev. Robert Hall, a Baptist says: "O Lord, thou that searchest the heart and triest the reins of the children of men, be thou the witness of what I am now about, in the strength of thy grace, to attempt: that grace I humbly and earnestly implore, to give validity and effect to that act of solemn engagement of myself to thy service, on which I am about to enter. * * * I do most humbly prostrate myself at the footstool of his cross, and through him enter into thy covenant. I disclaim all right to myself from henceforth, to my soul, my body, my time, my health, my reputation, my talents, or any thing that belongs to me. I confess myself to be the property of the glorious redeemer, as one whom I humbly hope he has redeemed by his blood to be part of the 'first fruits of his creatures.' * * * I dedicate myself to him to serve, love and trust in him as my life and my salvation to my life's end. I renounce the devil and all his works, the flesh and the world, with heartfelt regret that I should have been enslaved by them so long. * * * I do most solemnly devote and give up myself to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, agreeably to the terms of the gospel covenant, and in humble expectation of the blessings it ascertains, to sincere believers, I call thee to witness, O God, the truth and reality of this surrender of all I have, and all I am, to thee; and conscious of the unspeakable deceitfulness of my heart, I humbly and earnestly implore the influence of thy spirit, to enable me to stand steadfast in this covenant, as well as an interest in the blood of the Son, that I may be forgiven in those instances, (alas, that such an idea should be possible) in which I may, in any degree, swerve from it." Done this second day of May, 1809, seven o'clock in the evening, Leicester. ROBERT HALL."

It can scarcely be doubted that this solemn proceeding would have been more impressive, if *publicly* ratified with the other attendant solemnities of the similar proceeding as had in our Church. Dr. Doddrige earnestly recommends this self dedication, and both gives rules for conducting it, and a form for expressing it. Why he prefers this dedication to be *private*, rather than public as it was in the case of Josiah just referred to, and of Joshua and the people of Israel, when he had called them to choose whom they would serve, does not appear. But his remarks, as bearing upon the subject of our present lecture, are worthy of your attention. "As I would hope you are heartily determined for the service of God, I would now urge you to make a *solemn surrender of yourself* unto it. Do not only form such a purpose in your heart, but expressly declare it in the divine presence. Such solemnity in the manner of doing it, is certainly very reasonable in the

nature of things; and sure it is highly expedient, for binding to the Lord such a treacherous heart, as we know our own to be. It will be pleasant to reflect upon it, as done at such and such a time, with such and such circumstances of place and method, which may serve to strike the memory and the conscience. The sense of *the vows of God which are upon you*, will strengthen you in an hour of temptation; and the recollection may also encourage your humble boldness and freedom in applying to him, under the character and relation of your covenant *God and Father*, as future exigencies may require."

"I would farther advise and urge, that this dedication may be made with all possible solemnity. Do it in *express words*. And perhaps, it may be in many cases most expedient, as many pious divines have recommended to do it in *writing*. Set your hand and seal to it, 'that on such a day of such a month and year, and at such a place, on full consideration and serious reflection, you came to *this happy resolution*, that *whatever others might do, you would serve the Lord*.'"

In the form drawn up by the same pious author, he says, "Grant, that in my dying moments, and in the near prospects of eternity, I may remember these my engagements to thee, and may employ my latest breath in thy service! And do thou, Lord, when thou seest the agonies of dissolving nature upon me, *remember this covenant* too, even though I should then be incapable of recollecting it! Look down, O my heavenly Father, with a pitying eye, upon thy languishing, thy dying child; *place thine everlasting arms underneath me* for my support; put strength and confidence into my departing spirit; and receive it to the embraces of thine everlasting love! Welcome it to the abodes of *them that sleep in Jesus*, to wait with them that glorious day, when the last of thy promises to thy covenant people, shall be fulfilled in their triumphant resurrection, and that *abundant entrance*, which shall be *administered to them* into that *everlasting kingdom*, of which thou hast assured them by thy covenant, and in the hope of which I now *lay hold on it*; desiring to live and to die, as with mine hand on that hope!"

"And when I am thus numbered among the dead, and all the interests of mortality are over with me for ever, if *this solemn memorial* should chance to fall into the hands of any *surviving friends*, may it be the means of making serious impressions on their mind! May they read it, not only as my language, but as their own; and learn to fear *the Lord my God*, and with me to *put their trust under the shadow of his wings* for time and for eternity! And may they also learn to adore with me that grace, which inclines our hearts to *enter into the covenant*, and condescends to admit us into it when so inclined; ascribing with me, and with all the nations of the redeemed, *to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, that glory, honour, and praise, which is so justly due to each divine person, for the part he bears in this illustrious work!"

But, we have to point out a still more prominent advantage of Confirmation. It is a divinely ordained "means of grace," for when the apostles Peter and John laid their hands on certain persons at Samaria, we read "they received the Holy Ghost," and so at Ephesus, "when

Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them," and they who in Hebrews vi. 4, are said to have "tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost," are the persons, who had conformed to the "doctrine of baptisms and of laying on of hands" mentioned in the second verse of the same chapter. Do you feel a desire as did the pious psalmist, for "a clean heart and a right spirit," and you recollect that so you constantly pray in the prescribed services of the Church? Do you recognize that you are "not able to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve him without his special grace?" Do you own God the Holy Ghost as a teacher, sanctifier and comforter, and that he fulfills these offices in favour of those who conform to the prescribed conditions, or place themselves in the appointed way for receiving his light, and purification, and strength and consolation? You cannot consistently turn away from the "laying on of hands."

The advantages which have been named have reference to the partakers. I shall next advert to those in which the Church and society in general are interested. The administration of this rite promotes religious knowledge by impressively inviting parents, guardians and sponsors to teach, and the young to seek after such knowledge. It is an impressive medium of valuable instruction, as to baptism, its design and advantages, while it clears the doctrine of infant baptism of all reasonable objections, with respect to the obligation of a public religious profession on the part of those arrived at the years of discretion, contrary to the insinuation that the advocates of infant Church-membership overlook this reasonable service; as to the great doctrine of the covenant its duties and privileges; as to the doctrine of Episcopacy and the sin of schism, or separation from the centre of the Church's unity; and in particular, as to the influences of the holy spirit of God, their indispensableness to human knowledge, virtue and happiness, and as to the ordinances in the diligent use of which they are to be obtained. The rite of which we are speaking, is also monitorial, both to those who have not received it, and those who have not led the "rest of their lives according to this beginning." "Here, remarks Archbishop Secker, are a number of young disciples about to run the same common race, met together to pray for themselves and one another. Here are a number of elder Christians who have experienced the dangers of life, met to pray for those who are just entering into them: here are also God's ministers purposely come to intercede with him in their behalf." May it not be added, here are angels, though we see them not, for the Scripture says, "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth," and again, "in heaven the angels of these little ones do always behold the face of my father in heaven." I say, is not such a spectacle with all its associations, eminently adapted to affect the heart and influence the life?

It must also be a source of pure and useful gratification to the minister and his flock. Such a gratification is experienced by the pious heart on every occasion of baptism, and there will be a like and indeed a livelier emotion of gratitude and gladness, when the dedication to God is not merely "a charitable work" but made with each person's

own mouth and consent, and in the case of those who were baptized in riper years, manifests a persevering determination to be on the Lord's side.

QUESTIONS.

What is the first advantage of Confirmation which was mentioned in the lecture?

What is the second?

What is the third?

What is the fourth?

What is the import of the *sign* used in Confirmation?

Is it not a satisfaction to be *certified* of God's favour?

What did our Lord Jesus Christ promise to those who confessed him before men?

By whom was "self dedication" to God recommended?

How do you prove Confirmation to be a means of grace?

What are the advantages of Confirmation to the Church, and to society in general?

What doctrines does the administration of this ordinance inculcate?

What duties does it call us to?

Whom does it admonish?

To whom is it a gratification?

THE APOSTLES' CREED BRIEFLY EXPLAINED AND PRACTICALLY CONSIDERED.

(Continued from page 175, and concluded.)

The *twelfth*, being the *last Article* of the Apostles' Creed, is "I believe in the life everlasting." If the present life be the whole of man's being, he is only a little higher than the other creatures on the earth. He has few and trivial duties to perform; he is of all creatures the most miserable. But if he be immortal, he has high duties, high hopes, high enjoyments; he is clothed with new dignity, and beholds his friends with new attractions; he sees the things of time dwindled into insignificance, he is brought into a new element, to live with angels, and converse with God. To his character and happiness then, it is all important that he should feel the assurance of the apostle: "this mortal must put on immortality." The first evidence of man's immortality, which I would mention is derived from the goodness of our Maker. The idea that man was created to live only a few years, and yet gifted with such a relish for life; created for such a short life, and yet that life so unhappy; doomed to enter his being, to pass through it, and to pass from it *suffering*, cannot be reconciled with that benevolence which we see to pervade all nature. But, if man be immortal, then there is great mercy in making his probation as short as possible, there is great mercy in the discipline to which he is subjected, and there is abundant consolation in the reflection, that the evils of the present time are not worthy to be compared with that happiness hereafter which is unmixed and eternal. Reject the doctrine of man's immortality, and the benevolence of our Maker ap-

pears involved in impenetrable darkness. Admit this doctrine, and all is light. Man becomes the noblest monument of the goodness of God. This doctrine is in religion what the principle of gravitation is in nature. It explains what otherwise would be mysterious, and is the foundation of a perfect unity and beautiful harmony. Another evidence of man's immortality is the desire of it, which is so strong in every man's bosom. He who created man with the appetite of hunger presents him with the food by which it is to be satisfied. He who implanted in the soul affection, sets before it, beings on whom affection may rest. We might conclude therefore from the analogy of nature, that the desire of immortality has its proper object, as all other desires of man have their corresponding objects, that if other desires can be gratified so this also can be gratified if man will do his part. The divine wisdom would not have created an appetite in vain, an appetite without an object; nor would the divine goodness have implanted in his creature, a powerful desire which could never be gratified.

The different allotments of the righteous and the wicked on the earth is another argument for the immortality of man. In the strict sense, there are none good but God, still it is certain that there is a great difference in the character of men. Now, if this life was the whole of their being, it would be reasonable to expect that they who conformed nearest to the will of God would be the most prosperous, and that the most wicked would be the most afflicted. But as this is not the case, it is reasonable to look for a day, in which God will judge every man according to his deeds, when the rich oppressor shall receive his evil things and humble Lazarus be comforted. Take another view of the subject, as we behold the bad sometimes punished, and the good sometimes rewarded, we conclude that there is a moral government. But its sanctions are not uniformly apportioned. There must then be some future period when these seeming irregularities of the divine government shall be rectified when all shall be brought to the tribunal of justice, to receive the remainder or the whole of their proper reward or punishment.

In the principle of conscience may be traced another evidence of man's immortality. Conscience, the only moral guide of those who have not the gospel, perpetually tells them that obedience to God's law leads to happiness, and disobedience to misery. Now these consequences of their conduct are not fully experienced in the present life. But conscience cannot have been implanted to *deceive* men, and if she speaks the truth, there must be an hereafter, in which they shall reap the fruits of present conduct, in which her sentences shall be executed. The satiety of man in the possession of earthly enjoyments is another evidence that he was created for immortality. That the man, labouring under disease, oppressed with poverty, despised by his fellow men, deprived by death of his dear friends, should complain, could not surprise us. But, that he who has every comfort of this world, should be discontented, and pursue with the utmost ardor, object after object, valuing them only until they are obtained, can only be accounted for on the idea that nothing in this world can satisfy an immortal mind, that its desires can only be gratified in a purer and everlasting region. The superiority of man over the other creatures around him is another

intimation of his immortal nature. The sagacity of the brute, even when it most astonishes, is at best only a half reasoning power. It has but a faint, a distant resemblance, to the intelligence of human nature. Why this marked distinction, if, after a few years, man is to be like the brutes that perish? Why has he such superior powers, if they have no other sphere than this earth? Why is he called to higher pursuits, and higher hopes, if he have no higher destiny than the beast or the bird? Can it be possible that after a few years those noble faculties shall be quenched in eternal night, and of the man no more shall remain than of the worm that is trampled into dust? "He hath made us," says Cicero, "of a stature tall and upright, that beholding the heavens we might arrive to the knowledge of the gods; for we are not simply to dwell here as inhabitants of the earth, but to contemplate the heavens and the stars, a privilege not granted to any other kind of animated beings." If man be mortal his pursuits should centre in this world. But his superior endowments lead him to pursuits inconsistent with a mortal nature. If he be mortal, what advantage, as it respects happiness, has he over the brute creation, for if he has peculiar joys he has also peculiar sorrows, afflicting recollections, constant cares, and painful anticipations. Let us not doubt that his happiness, proportioned to his elevation in the scale of creation, is immortal. Only a little lower than the angels in intelligence, let us not doubt that he is only a little lower in glory and honour. Another intimation of man's immortal nature is his capacity for communion with his God. The good man loves to meditate on the excellence of that being from whom he came, by whom he is sustained, in whose hands are the issues of life and death. He loves to mark the traces of this great and good being in the system of nature, in the government of mankind and in the incidents of his own life. He walks into his field, and he sees his God, he sits in his closet and hears him speak, he is surrounded by the busy and gay, but feels none so near him as his father in heaven. I speak now of what may be properly called the religious sense, a feeling which finds its gratification in thinking of God; in coming, if I may so speak, into his presence, which draws near to him not with the body, not with the lips merely, but with the soul and heart. This feeling shows that the proper happiness of man is intercourse with his maker. May we not conclude then that he will have that happiness hereafter in its perfection? This feeling shows that man is qualified to hold intercourse with his maker. Surely that high qualification would not have been conferred merely for this world. Surely the being created for communion with his maker must have been created for immortality. The independency of the soul on the body is another intimation of its immortality. There is indeed an intimate connexion between the soul and the body. The body naturally inert, moves not without the impulse of the soul, and they have many joys and sorrows in common. Still there are occasions in which, while the earthly tabernacle is motionless, its inhabitant is on the wing; while the body is tortured with pain, the soul preserves its serenity and even gleams with joy; when, as the apostle expresses it, "though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day." This independency

of soul is conceived without difficulty, and even enters into our familiar conversation, for what is more common than to say, I am sick but not distressed, my pains are severe but my spirits are good. Under this independency of soul, the martyr in flames is patient, and even triumphant; under this independency of soul, the face of St. Stephen, when he was stoned to death, shone as if it had been the face of an angel; and the blessed Jesus, when he was nailed to the cross calmly said, "weep not for me." Under this independency, the soul, while the body is steeped in sleep, carries on all her operations, converses with the mighty dead, soars towards heaven. If then the sleep, the inactivity and the sufferings of the body do not always extend to the soul, why should she be affected by its dissolution? If she can retain her activity in a disordered, decaying, and sluggish body, why may she not outlive the shock of death? The presumption is strong that she will. She acts for hours *without* the body, she may so act for *all* hours for ever.

The capacity of the soul for progressive improvement, is an intimation of its immortality. However great its attainments, it is ever conscious that it can be wiser, better and happier, forgetting those things which are behind, it reaches forth unto those things which are before; but in this world it never attains its height of excellence, the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, to which it perpetually presses. How different is it with our corporeal powers. They soon reach their acme of agility and strength and then gradually become feeble and sluggish. In brutes too, length of days adds nothing to their stock of improvement, and they *soon* arrive at their limit of attainment. In them the design of the creator appears fully accomplished, the capacities he had conferred are fully developed. Will not the powers of the soul also be developed at some period of its existence? Will its wonderful abilities never be exercised, but perish almost as soon as they have begun to act? Surely it will continue to move after death to its proper point of excellence. Surely it will survive the present fleeting scene. Again:—the soul is capable of longer life than it enjoys in this world. On the body the traces of disease and age, the tendencies to dissolution are visible to every eye. It is obviously a house of clay destined to moulder. Now, did we perceive the soul always exhausted by sickness and worn out by age, we might conclude that it was gradually approaching a fate similar to that of the body, but we find the soul exhibiting its ordinary vigour at all periods of human life, under the pressure of bodily sufferings, and on the very threshold of mortality. We justly conclude, therefore, that a longer existence is allotted to the soul, than is allotted to the body. The body has not a capacity for long life, but the soul has such a capacity. Now as the capacities of the body are all developed, we conclude that the capacities of the soul will be developed, that this capacity for long life will be developed, of course that it will live beyond the grave. The circumstance, that in the creation, nothing absolutely perishes, or is lost, corroborates this view of the subject. The substances around us sustain perpetual mutations. The maggot, is a worm, a chrysalis,

a butterfly, and then dust. Nothing is annihilated so far as we know, and therefore we conclude that the soul will not be annihilated. But it is by annihilation only, that the soul could lose its properties, for it is indivisible. The body loses its properties by a decomposition of its parts, but the soul is immaterial and therefore cannot be decomposed, of course it will retain its properties forever.

Another and a strong evidence of the immortality of the soul, is the belief of it so generally entertained. The doctrine of the transmigration of the soul is but a corruption of that respecting its immortality. In vain is antiquity explored. In vain is the modern traveller followed into undiscovered regions to find a single nation disbelieving this great truth. The phenomenon of a government pronouncing death an eternal sleep, has indeed been witnessed in our times, but they have long since retracted this error, and there is no reason to believe, that it was ever held by any great proportion of their subjects. If this general sentiment be an error it would probably have vanished before the light of improvement. But it is most firmly cherished where man is most advanced in intellectual progress. The instance cannot be produced of an error prevailing so long and universally. Prejudice cannot be the foundation of this belief, for the wise and the simple, he who desires and he who dreads the future life concur in expecting it. It must then have had its origin either in a divine revelation, or it must have been implanted by the creator himself in the mind. In either case, it is heaven itself that intimates eternity to man. The consent of nations to this truth, says one of the wisest of the heathen, is the voice of nature. While we have so many intimations of our immortality, there are in the works and providence of God, none of a contrary character. The manner in which disembodied spirits exist, cannot, it is true, be easily conceived. But if we had never seen the transmutation of a worm into a butterfly, could we have formed any idea of it, or knowing the fact can we account for the manner in which nature performs the process? Surely the weakness of our conceptions ought not to lead us to question the divine power, or to doubt a doctrine supported by adequate evidence.

But if the declarations of God's *providence* are not explicit, we have the declarations of his word. If the ministry of nature speak not clearly, blessed be God, we have the ministry of revelation. If the evidences which have been mentioned, should appear unsatisfactory, we have the testimony of God himself to assure us of our immortality. For *this* purpose the Son of God came into the world, to bring life and immortality to light. This doctrine is explicitly asserted in the old testament. "The dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it. The spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth." And with what confidence and assurance do the inspired writers speak. "I know (says Job,) though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold and not another." Hear St. John, "whosoever liveth and believeth in the Lord shall never die," and St. Paul, "we know that we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the

heavens. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord." "This mortal *must* put on immortality."

There is then, a life everlasting. And it is a life not like the present of *mingled* happiness and suffering, but of perfect happiness to some, and perfect misery to others; for God will render to every man according to his deeds: "Glory, honour and peace to every man that worketh *good*, but indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth *evil*, of the Jew first and also of the Gentile." The testimony of Scripture is sufficient for the Christian, but it is very pleasant to find this most important doctrine so corroborated by nature and by providence. It is a doctrine at the very foundation of all religion. And the Christian must be grateful and glad that the evidences of it are so many and satisfactory.

My brethren, when you recollect that the goodness of God; the desire of immortality implanted within; the different allotment of the good and bad; the principle of conscience; the satiety of earthly joys experienced by all; man's superiority to the brute creation; his capacity for communion with God; the independency of the soul on the body; the continued progress of the soul towards a perfection never attained in this life; the circumstance that nothing in nature perishes though it may undergo changes; the universal consent of mankind, and above all the holy Scriptures declare that there is a "life everlasting;" I say, when you reflect on these things, you must have in that article of your Creed, the full assurance of hope. And *what hope* can be compared with this? Think for a moment. Death has taken from you some of your dearest friends, and threatens to seize *you* as his victim. But there is a life everlasting. You are wearied and perplexed with cares and anxieties. But there is another and a better life. Blessed be God that this prospect is denied to no man. And thrice blessed be his holy name, that to us who have the gospel, it is a prospect clear and bright as the sun, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also, which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. Let it, as indeed it ought, raise our affections from a world which passeth away, to that heaven which endures for ever. Let us who have such a prize before us, not stoop to contend for the honours and riches of this world. Let the brutes that perish contend for perishing objects. Let us cherish that self respect which will prevent our being *engrossed* by *present* pursuits. Let us love our fellow-men more and more, since we are brethren in immortality. Let us love our *heavenly father* more and more, since he has made us not for this life merely, but for the life everlasting. And let us adore the goodness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but for whose cross and passion, immortality would have been a curse—an immortality of woe; for there is none other name but his given under heaven, whereby we can be saved from the second death, with which the evils of the first death are not to be compared; and it is through him only that we have access to the father, to his heaven where sin and sorrow are unknown, and virtue and happiness have an undisturbed and endless dominion; where is fulness of joy and life for evermore. But if immortality be a fond hope, a pleasing de-

sire, it is so only to those who have made their peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to the penitent believers in him, through whom alone we can be saved. As there is a resurrection to life, or happiness, so there is a resurrection to damnation. They on the left hand "shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." The word here translated everlasting and eternal, is the same in the original. This final article of our Creed, then, is both an encouragement and a warning, a cause for fear or hope, according to each man's character, as he has accepted or rejected Christ.



FOR THE GOSPEL MESSENDER.

MARYLAND CONVENTION.

Messrs. Editors,—In your number for July, was what I call "a letter on consistency." I need not say that I approve of it, and hope it will do good. To praise the institutions, usages and formularies of our Church, and yet to depart from both in the letter and the spirit is becoming not uncommon. This assertion could be proved by more than one statement of facts that would raise a smile, if the matter was not too serious. But my present purpose is to direct attention to some particulars very similar to those connected with the Virginia Convention, on which the letter above referred to commented. In the Episcopal Recorder, June 14, in a letter on the "Maryland Convention," it is thus written, "we all recognized—in order to prevent the evils arising from heresy and schism, the upholding of the ministry, and forms of worship received in our communion—as constituting the old paths wherein is the good way, &c." In the same letter it is stated, "on Thursday morning at 6 o'clock, the Church was opened for prayer. Two exhortations were made;"—again "on Friday the Church was again opened at 6 o'clock, A. M. for prayer. Two exhortations were made as on the former occasion." Now, it is not asked, whether the public service at that very early hour would not probably interfere with family worship and indeed closet worship; and whether the former service, viz. public prayer, would not be considered by too many a substitute for the latter services, viz. private and family prayer. Nor do we ask whether those clergymen assembled at the sunrise public worship would not have passed their time more profitably at their respective homes, each one conducting the prayers and reading the bible for those families with which they were domesticated; many individuals of which, as the little children, and the aged, and the servants, could not attend the meeting at the Church. But we do ask, whether it is one of the "old paths" of our Church to have "two exhortations" on the same occasion of public instruction, that is, to have two ministers, one immediately after the other deliver sermons or exhortations? We take it for granted that both the exhorters were ministers, as we do, that agreeably to the 45th Canon, there were "no other prayers than those prescribed in the said Book" of Common Prayer.

It is clear the *two* exhortations are not canonical, or rubrieal, or consistent with the usage and general spirit of our institutions, and I hope Episcopalian will pause before they consent to open the door to a

practice which would probably lead to discussions in the pulpit, to rivalry; to the instituting of comparisons, in short to disorder. Is not this the very practice against which St. Paul warns us, 1 Cor. xiv. 26. "How is it, brethren, when ye come together, every one of you hath a doctrine—an interpretation. Let all things be done to edifying."

OBSTA PRINCIPIIS.

—♦—
SERMON VII.

Colossians iv. 1.

"Masters give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven."

Having shown in the former discourses upon these words, I. That all masters and mistresses are under an indispensable obligation of bringing up their slaves in the knowledge and fear of God.

II. That the due performance of this duty is necessarily attended with many great and singular advantages, both in respect of this world and of the world to come. And

III. That the common objections and excuses which people make for neglecting it, are vain and trifling; having no better foundation than mistake, pride, laziness, too much care for the world, or too little care about matters relating to God and religion.

It now remains, as was at first proposed, to consider,

IV. In what manner this duty may best be performed, to the discharging of our consciences, and with the greatest probability of success.

It is certain, that the pious, well disposed Christian, who sets about this duty with a sincere desire of promoting the glory of God, and the eternal happiness of his poor slaves, will want very little instruction how to perform it. His own sincerity and zeal for the salvation of their souls, will hint ten thousand methods of going to work, and make him watchful over every circumstance that can any way contribute to the success of his godly designs. It is also certain, that great allowances are to be made for the particular tempers and dispositions we may meet with among them, and our manner of dealing with them, in order to bring them to God, must needs be suited to the different turns of their genius and understanding; all which seem to make directions of this sort less necessary or less useful. A few general rules, may, however, be laid down; which may serve as a foundation for our proceedings herein, and may be varied according to the wants and circumstances of every Christian family. And, as the best beginnings always promise the fairest endings, it seems necessary,

1. To begin with a serious reformation of our own lives and conversations.

This, my brethren, is undoubtedly the most rational foundation we can propose to build upon with hopes of success. If we would persuade people that certain things are bad or hurtful, we must let them see that we take care to avoid what we condemn. If we would convince people that some things are good and desirable, we must show by

[August,

our behaviour that we really seek after, and strive to obtain those matters, otherwise they will not believe us. If our advice goes one way and our conduct runs another course, we lay ourselves open to a charge either of lying and hypocrisy, in saying things are so and so, when it seems plain from our behaviour that we are not in earnest; or else of the greatest weakness, folly, and stupidity, in acting contrary to what is right with our eyes wide open, against the strongest evidence and calls of conscience and interest. Nothing shuts up the mouth more effectually, or ties the tongue in stronger bonds, than a consciousness of vice and immorality; when every word we speak, every argument we use in favour of piety and virtue, throws a stinging reproach upon our own conduct, and pronounces the sentence of our own condemnation. Nor, indeed, could any thing be supposed more ridiculous, than to see a notorious, idle, drunken fellow, rise up in his cups and strive to recommend industry and sobriety to all the by-standers. This sort of absurdity is finely pointed out in St. Paul's words to a Jewish teacher: "Behold thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God; and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes; which hast the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law. Thou, therefore, which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest, a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man, should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking of the law, dishonourest thou God?" After which the apostle points out the natural evil consequence of men's pretending to reform others, while they want to be reformed themselves, viz. that it tends to harden the hearts of unbelievers, and to give them a bad opinion of the religion recommended to them. For the name of God, saith he, is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you.

In short, my brethren, our servants have eyes as well as ears, and take in their notions much sooner by the one than by the other. What they see they can readily understand, and may speedily be brought to imitate; but reasoning and argument require more time and consideration; are not so easily apprehended, and, if opposed by our own behaviour, lose all their force. The most ignorant among them, can plainly perceive that it must be an advantage to us, if we can persuade them to believe and behave like good Christians; and is it not natural enough for them, when we recommend conscience, honesty, fidelity, and temperance to them, at the same time that we show little regard to these matters in our own lives and conversations, to suspect that we want to put a cheat upon them, and to tie them up to rules, which we do not think necessary for ourselves to observe; and that it is our own interest, not the good of their souls which we really have at heart? And, surely, to preach up the doctrines of Christianity to them, while we seem to have but little concern about putting them in practice, or fear of God's threatenings denounced against the impenitent and dis-

obedient, must give them a reasonable doubt of our sincerity. Besides, sin is a disorder of the most catching, infectious kind ; in our present state of corruption and infirmity, we are naturally prone to it ; it flatters our senses, and courts our passions, and is therefore sooner learnt and deeper impressed upon the mind, than practical lessons of piety and morality, which combat our sensual desires, and require some degree of mortification and self-denial. So that examples of it are always dangerous to the beholders ; especially if the sinner have a credit and authority with those who are witnesses of their conduct. Men readily fall into the ways and customs of their superiors, and think they pay a compliment to their understanding and judgment, in imitating their manners. From all which considerations it is evident, that if we would attempt to reform our servants, with any probability of success, we must begin with a serious reformation of our own lives and conversations, and show them by our conduct that we really believe it to be a duty required of all men, to forsake their sins, and amend their lives and convince them by this solid proof, that we are in earnest, before we can expect they should give credit to what we say or seriously strive to be those good and faithful servants to God and us, which we tell them it is their duty to become.

I have dwelt the longer upon this head, because it is of the utmost importance, and seems to be but little considered among us. For there is too much reason to fear, that the many vices and immoralities so common among white people ; the lewdness, quarrelling, abusiveness, swearing, lying, pride, backbiting, overreaching, idleness, and sabbath-breaking, every where to be seen among us, are a great encouragement to our negroes to do the like, and help strongly to confirm them in habits of wickedness and impiety.

2dly, We ought not only to avoid giving them bad examples, and abstain from all appearance of evil, but also strive to set a daily good example before their eyes, that seeing us lead the way in our own person, they may more readily be persuaded to follow us in the wholesome paths of religion and virtue. This would be to imitate our blessed Saviour himself, who not only taught us the will of God, but gave us an exact pattern of obedience to it, in his own most innocent and holy life ; and who is called the way, to teach us, that, as no man cometh to the father but by him ; so the true way to heaven, is to tread in his steps, and to follow that track, which he hath marked out for us. This he farther recommends to us in the following precept, which on account of its excellency and importance, stands at the head of the sentence in the offertory in our Communion service : " let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven ;" which teaches us that a good example is like a shining radiant light, whose beauty and brightness engages men to draw near to it and follow it ; thus proving an instrumental cause of God's glory, the most exalted and noblest end for which we were sent into this world : and which, no doubt, will be rewarded with a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the world to come.

Such a course of reformation and godliness, as hath been commended in the two foregoing heads, must needs be of the utmost advantage to ourselves. For if it should work no effect upon the minds of our servants, which scarce seems probable, yet we should thereby save our own souls, through God's mercy in Christ, and secure an interest and possession forever in heaven.

3dly, To this serious reformation of our lives and good example, we must add constant and earnest prayer to Almighty God for his blessing upon our faithful pious endeavours. When we attempt the conversion of sinners and infidels, we engage in the immediate cause of God; and herein, as before observed, we are no more than instruments of his glory and the good of others. The employment is, indeed, the most honourable we can undertake, as we thereby become workers together with Christ in promoting the salvation of mankind. And surely, we need no stronger motive, for daily presenting our most humble and pressing petitions to the throne of grace, that he may account us worthy of so great honour, and assure us of his gracious acceptance by crowning our labours with desired success. By these prayers offered up in the sincerity of our hearts, we acknowledge our own weakness and insufficiency, and our daily want of the divine assistance; for who, my brethren, among us, is sufficient for these things? By these we own our absolute dependence upon him, and bid defiance to boasting and pride, the worst and most dangerous of all spiritual evils. By these we preserve ourselves in a due state of humility, and check all foolish aspiring thoughts of our own worth and understanding. And by these we obtain the help of that holy spirit, whose grace and influence must complete the work, and give success to our pious endeavours. To which end, it will be proper for us always to keep in remembrance, those memorable words of St. Paul, which are recorded for our instruction in these matters. I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.

Wickedness and infidelity, may well be compared to a certain kind of evil spirits, which go not out but by prayer and fasting, and which the disciples themselves could not cast out, for want of a faithful use of those means. And if we would cast a spirit of paganism, of error, or profaneness out of our servants, we must have recourse to frequent prayer, as that which gives the best edge and temper to those weapons, with which we make an attack upon the kingdom of darkness. This was our Saviour's own method, when he was upon earth. Thus we are told by St. Luke, that the evening before he made choice of his twelve apostles, he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And no doubt, his earnest addresses to his heavenly father, were to obtain a blessing on their ministry, and success to their labours. Thus did he pray for Peter, that his faith might not fail. Thus did he pray for all his disciples, and not for them alone, but for all them that should believe on him through their word. By virtue of this prayer, was the Holy Ghost sent into his Church, to be its comforter and companion forever; and by the same method, does he now continue to carry on the great concerns of his mediator.

ial kingdom; sitting on the right hand of the father, and ever making intercession for all those that come to God by him. To this purpose are those frequent prayers of St. Paul, for those he laboured to bring to God, and particularly that remarkable one in his epistle to the Philippians, wherein he prays, that they might abound more and more in knowledge and in judgment; that they might not only approve the things that are excellent, but also continue in the same, in sincerity and without offence, till the day of Christ.

4th. Besides this daily, fervent prayer in private to God for their conversion, we ought to establish the constant use of family prayer in our houses. To the general, shameful neglect of this duty, is owing a vast deal of that carelessness, remissness, irregularity and disorder, which prevail so much amongst us. And, truly, so little of the worship of God is to be seen in our houses, that, (to our reproach be it spoken,) were a stranger to travel through the country, except what he might observe at Church on Sundays, or in a very few pious families, it would be difficult for him to judge what sort of religion we professed; or, indeed, whether we had any religion at all.

By establishing family worship in our houses, we not only engage the particular favour and protection of God, whose presence and influence will never be wanting, where two or three are gathered together in his name; but we thereby keep up a continual sense of our duty to him; a desire of being approved by him; an hatred and abhorrence of sin, and an holy awe of his displeasure; and teach our poor ignorant slaves an heavenly language, in which they may learn to address their great Creator, and pray for blessings upon themselves and us. This also will teach them a decent and orderly behaviour; reclaim the roughness and fierceness of their nature; form their minds to modesty and mildness, and increase their love and respect to us, in proportion as they advance in reverence and veneration towards Almighty God.

5th. We ought to read and study the holy Scriptures ourselves, that we may be better prepared to read and explain them to our children and slaves.

And, surely, if we would pretend to teach divine knowledge to others we must first seek to obtain it ourselves: for it is rank nonsense, to offer to teach a lesson we never learnt or studied. The word of God is an inexhaustible fountain of heavenly truth, whence all that will apply for it, may not only draw a sufficiency for their own wants, but with its overflowings, may supply the necessities of others that thirst after it. The care of our own souls, as well as those of our servants, requires this duty at our hands; nor can any stronger motive be urged, for a serious and diligent study of the holy Scriptures, than that they are able to make us and them wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus, and to these spiritual ones, as a farther encouragement, may be added those temporal blessings promised by the holy psalmist, to the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates therein day and night; namely, that he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in season: his leaf also shall not wither and whatsoever he doth shall prosper.

6th. We ought to make this reading, and studying the holy scriptures, and the reading and explaining them to our children and slaves, and the catechizing or instructing them in the principles of the Christian religion, a stated duty.

This may be done by setting apart particular times and seasons for the performance; which we should resolve to observe, and never miss but upon very extraordinary and pressing occasions. We may once a day at least, if not twice, bestow a small portion of our time in reading and meditating on the word of God. We may have our fixed hour for it, either morning, or evening, or both, as best suits our convenience; and make a resolution never to break through these voluntary rules, or spend the hours we thus dedicate to the service of God, and the study of his laws, in any other employment, unless in cases of great necessity. This reading and explaining some part of the Scripture to our families, and catechising or instructing our children and slaves, in the principles of the Christian religion, may be performed once a week at least, and Sunday evening may be set apart for that purpose; thus ending the day, which we may suppose to have begun well at Church, in the best and most edifying manner at home.

These stated times once fixed upon, and begun with a settled resolution of observing them, will be found of great use, for keeping us in a steady, uniform practice of godliness and virtue. They will make the worship and service of God familiar to us, and cause us to look upon it as a necessary business of human life. We shall soon begin to feel the comfort and advantage of them, in the regulation of our lives, and the inward peace and satisfaction that arises from a consciousness of living in the honest discharge of our duty, and the hopes of dying in it: and shall find these performances, by degrees, to become so pleasant and habitual, that we shall look for them, as we do for our stated time of food and refreshment, and be as uneasy at the neglect or omission of one of them, as we should be at the want of a meal, or our usual rest at its proper hour.

The parts of Scripture we attempt on such occasions to explain, may be such particular passages, or sentences of piety and morality, as have most strongly affected us in our week-days meditations; or perhaps, such as have been explained in the sermon preached in the morning, thus confirming the doctrines in our own memories, and impressing them upon the hearts and minds of our households, which will make those discourses doubly profitable to us.

To teach them the Church catechism, and make them perfect in the answers, is a most useful work, and the best means of grounding them in the knowledge of God through Christ: but to instruct them in the meaning of the words, is absolutely necessary for their perfection in it. Many children shall be able to say the whole catechism by heart, without missing a single word: but when they are cross-questioned, or asked the same thing in words different from those set down in the questions, they shall not know what answer to give. Catechising ought therefore, always to be accompanied with some short explanation, suited to the capacities of children or slaves; and that may easily be had in a variety of small pamphlets, published for that purpose by the religious Societies, and which, if wanting, I shall take care to supply.

ON SLANDER.—COMMUNICATED.

Whether the imputation be true or false, that women are particularly addicted to the vice of slander, it cannot be deemed unsuitable to suggest a caution upon this subject. Character is a sacred thing, and it is unworthy of you to trifle with it. To sit in judgment upon others and to pronounce a hasty verdict upon actions, which may be carelessly misrepresented, or words, if not *intentionally*, yet *heedlessly* misquoted, without affording an opportunity to the condemned individual to speak for himself, is unjust in the extreme. But how many excellent persons are made the butt of ridicule, or tossed about as the playthings of a gossiping spirit, which, incapable of a direct charge, gratifies its malignity by infusing calumnies into the too listening ear of prejudice. An idle report, is by this means magnified and circulated to an incalculable extent; or the infirmitiess of excellent characters animadverted upon, for no other purpose than to fill up the waste moments of a ceremonious visit. Women should assume their proper rank, by aspiring to the dignity of rational intercourse, and not degrade themselves and disquiet society by engaging in a petty warfare against the reputation of others.

Let what is termed *religious conversation* turn rather upon *things* than *persons*; otherwise men in public stations, perhaps of *equal* though *dissimilar* excellence will be in danger of undue praise or excessive depreciation. The favourite preacher will be unmercifully extolled and the unpopular one as cruelly degraded. A clashing of opinion will be apt to produce rivalries and invigorate partialities, till probably the effect of their respective labours will be lost upon these fair but injudicious critics. Let young women particularly take the hint and "set a watch upon the door of their lips." Beware of indiscriminate censure or extravagant applause; regard the ministers of the word, as the servants of God; receive instruction from their lips with all humility; pray for their increasing wisdom, and tenderly cherish their good name. If a Moses, with all his excellence, seem to you to assume, or in any respect commit an error, do not be the first to publish it abroad, or to aggravate by misrepresentation, a failing which is blended with such acknowledged worth. Remember it is as likely that you should be mistaken in your judgment, as that *he* should be faulty in spirit or conduct, and that if your detractions be not visited with an outward token of displeasure, they render you most unlovely in the sight of God and man. "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature. Every kind of beast and of birds, and of serpents and things in the sea, hath been tamed of mankind; but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison."—*Female Scripture Biography.*



His courage (the Missionary Swartz) was that of a man who is conscious that he is living in a world where no evil, worth a thought, could possibly happen to him, except the evil of falling into wilful and impudent sin; and against this evil he felt a constant security.

INSENSIBILITY TO THE FUTURE; BY DR. CHALMERS.*

From Abbot's Religious Magazine.

This insensibility to the futurities of our immortal state is one of those strange anomalies in our nature than which none are more certain and yet perhaps none more inexplicable. We know that so it is, but we feel a vast difficulty—by any effort of mental analysis, or any power of discernment into the mysteries of the human constitution, to determine how it is. The fact is undeniable. It is the reason of the fact which is so hard of solution, and so copiously beyond all the attempts of reason to give account of. For it is not that man is actually satisfied with present things; that is not the reason—it is not that he is sitting down in placid acquiescence among the creatures and the circumstances by which for the moment he is surrounded. We see nothing of the repose of full and finished attainment in any of our acquaintances; there is not one of them, in fact, who is not plainly stretching himself forward to some distant object or other, by the tokens of which he is evidently on the pursuit. We behold him in a state of motion and activity and busy endeavour; but when we inquire into the nature of the object which so stimulates his desires and his faculties, you may find it to be something that lies within the confines of mortality—something suited to such senses and such powers of enjoyment as death will extinguish—something that he will perhaps hand down to posterity, but which a few happy years will wrest away from himself, and that by an act of everlasting bereavement.

We cannot move amongst our fellows whether in meetings or in market places, or even on those convivial occasions when man is so willing to drown all his graver anxieties in the playfulness of the passing hour, without most plainly perceiving that the present is not enough for him—that he is constantly going forth in anticipation of some distant future which he has not realized—that instead of the quiescence of one who has found the promised end, he has the forecast, and restlessness, and doubt of one who is still agog and seeking. There is not an individual we know, who is not thus bounding onward, and that with the certain strenuousness of his whole heart, to some object which lies, or seems to lie in the vast horizon before him. But when we come to inquire how far on the line of his history it may be placed, we find, in the overwhelming majority of instances, that it belongs to the region of sense, and almost never to the region of spirituality—that the main efforts of human ambition are lavished on some brief and splendid evanescence, which cannot last to any single possessor beyond his own puny generation. Now that all are seeking there can be no doubt; but where is the discernable symptom of almost any seeking beyond the confines of that territory which God hath spread under our feet, first for the sustenance, and then, for the sepulchre of human bodies? Where is the man who is prosecuting with

* The eloquent and strongly characteristic passage which constitutes this article, is from a very recent Sermon.

the assiduity of business, his personal interest in that country where dwell the spirits of just men made perfect? This tendency towards the distant unseen, stood out most plainly and most clearly in the history of the believing patriarchs, of whom we read in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews; but now the tendency of almost every man we see is plainly the opposite of this; so that travelling the round of human experience it may nearly be affirmed without alleviation of all, that they are a horde of hard driving creatures, in full pursuit of something that lies in the distance before them, which they can only hold in frail and fleeting tenantry while they abide in this world, and which death—remorseful and insatiable death—will soon ravish from their grasp.

Now to behold in man such a fondness for futurity enhances the paradox. Were man satisfied with present things, this might explain his startling insensibility to the futurities of the unseen world; but when we find that palpably he is greatly more engrossed with things future, than with things present, we say, it enhances the paradox we are now speaking of. To behold in man such a fondness for futurity, and, at the same time, such a perverseness in all his computations of futurity—to see him so disdainful of the past, and so dissatisfied with the present, and yet still labouring for the future, and fixing his regards on that only futurity which must soon be present, and soon be irrevocably past—to see him so boundless in his desires, and yet so averse to the alone field of enterprize where he can find scope for them, and so unwilling to exchange the objects of time for those of a boundless eternity—to perceive him so obstinately and so peremptorily blind in this matter, and that not merely in the face of the most obviously admitted dangers, but in the face of the most urgent and affecting mementos with which sad history is ever strewing his path in this world—surely it is one of the strangest mysteries of our nature, and, at the same time one of the strongest tokens of its strangeness, that man should thus embark all his desires in a frail and crazy vessel, so soon to be engulfed by that sweeping whirlwind which, sooner or later, will overtake the whole of our existing generation—that on the quicksands of time he should rear his only resting place, and even please himself with the delusion of its firm and secure establishment, though he knows, and most assuredly knows, that a few little years will witness its total and irremediable overthrow.

Now to explore a little further this mystery of our constitution. Let me observe, that to alleviate this gross infatuation, it may be said, and has been said with plausibility too, that the region of sense and the region of spirituality are so unlike the one to the other, that there is positively nothing in the experience of the former that can at all make out a claim to the conceptions of the latter; and then, again, as if to intercept the flight of our imagination forwards to eternity, there is a dark and cloudy envelopement that hangs on the very entrance to it. Ere we can realize that distant world of souls, we must pierce our way beyond the curtain of the grave—we must scale the awful barricado which separates the visible from the invisible—we must make our escape from all the close, and warm, and besetting agencies which, in this land of human bodies, are ever plying us with constant and pow-

erful solicitations, and force our way beyond the boundaries of sense, to that mysterious place where cold and meagre, and evanescent spectres dwell.

We know not that there is another tribe of beings in the universe who have such a task to perform. Angels have no death to undergo; there is no such fear of unnatural violence between them and their final destiny. It is for man, and for aught that appears it is for man alone, to watch, from the other side of the material panorama that surrounds him, the great and the amazing realities with which he has everlastingly to do—it is for him, so locked in an imprisonment of clay, and with no other loopholes of communication between himself and all that surrounds him than the eye and the ear—it is for him to light up in his bosom a lively and a realizing sense of the things that eye hath never seen, and ear hath never heard. It is for man, and perhaps for man alone, to travel in thought over the ruins of a mighty desolation, and beyond the wreck of that present world by which he is encompassed, to conceive that future world on which he is to expatriate for ever. But a harder achievement, perhaps than any,—it is for a man, in the exercise of faith, to observe that most appalling of all contemplations, the decay and dissolution of himself; to think of the time when his now animated frame-work, every part of which is so sensitive and dear to him, shall fall to pieces—when the vital warmth by which at present it is so thoroughly pervaded shall take its departure, and leave to coldness and abondonment all that is visible of this moving, and acting, and thinking creature—when those limbs, with which he now steps so firmly, and that countenance out of which he now looks so gracefully, and that tongue with which he now speaks so eloquently; when that whole body for the interest and provision of which he now labours so strenuously, as if indeed it were immortal—when all these shall be reduced to one mass of putrefaction, and at length crumble, with the coffin that encloses them, into dust! Why, my brethren, to a being in the full consciousness and possession of its living energies, there is something, if I may be allowed the expression, so foreign and so unnatural in death, that we ought not to wonder if it scare away the mind from that ethereal region of existence to which it is hastening. Angels have no such transition of horror and mystery to undergo. There is no screen of darkness like this interposed between them and the portion of their futurity, however distant; and it appears that it is for man only to drive a bridge across that barrier which looks so impenetrable, or so to surmount the power of vision as to carry his aspirings over the summits of all that revelation has made known to him.

This is at best but an approximation to the solution of the mystery. I am not sure that a full satisfactory solution is at all practicable; but however uncontrollable the task may be, satisfactorily to explain the reason of this strange infatuation, let us never cease from our efforts, when there is even but a slight and shadowy chance of success, practically to overcome it; and for this reason it is right to sound the alarm that has so oft been sounded before without success—it is our duty to reiterate the attack on the heretofore unmoved listlessness and lethargy

of the human spirit. It is true that a moment of tragic sensibility may be all the effect of an argument drawn from the rapid flight of those days which have passed over our heads, and the wide and wasting ravages that death has made on our familiar society ; nevertheless, it is right again to aver, that your days will soon be summed up, and that your death bed with all its agonies, its fears, and its heart rending separations will soon be realized. We know that it is not the moving eloquence of the preacher which will dislodge this infatuation, and that it needs a strength mightier than that of human argument to make a breach on the carnality in which man hath so firmly entrenched him.

NOBLE, JUST, REFRESHING, CHRISTIAN SENTIMENTS.

From the Churchman.

In his letter to the Vestry of St. Luke's, New-York, the Rev. Mr. Whittingham says, "I have consulted, in conjunction with my own physicians, one of the most eminent medical practitioners in the city. The result is, conviction that *I have no reasonable prospect of future ability to discharge the duties devolving on your Pastor.* I cannot, therefore, retain a situation which I am no longer competent to fill, and though with the most poignant regret, feel myself compelled to resign the *Rectorship of St. Luke's Church.*"

From the moment of my entrance among you, I have been treated with a kindness and forbearance, a generous and affectionate friendship, for which I feel it to be as impossible adequately to express my thanks, as it will be ever to forget it. He who regards the favours shown to the least of his servants as done to himself, will reward you.

Whatever may hereafter be my lot, the remembrance of our connexion will be an alleviation of its ills, or an enhancement of its pleasures ; and so long as it shall please God to prolong my life, I shall not cease to implore his choicest blessings for those whom I now, for the last time, address as their faithful and affectionate Pastor."

In their reply, the Vestry say, "It would be trite and useless to reciprocate expressions of regret ; for you must be aware of the sentiments which we cherish toward you ; and you well know, that of all the trials to which we are exposed in this state of pain and sorrow, none are more severe than lasting separation from those whom we esteem and love.

That you should be arrested, in the midst of your useful and honorable career, by bodily infirmity and the threats of a mortal disease, is a circumstance which, in itself, appears distressing in the extreme. Yet, God, is our witness that we intend nothing like adulation or exaggerated phraseology when we assure you, that there is something in the character of your spirit which seems to forbid excessive grief on account of any of the calamities of this life with which you may be visited. A spirit which, during its abode in the body, has maintained uninterrupted communion with its God, which has learned habitually to rise above the grovelling interests of this transient scene, which feels a deep and humble conviction that all the dispensations of Providence are just and merciful, and which devoutly cherishes the sentiment that its noblest sphere of existence and of action is not in time, but in eter-

uity; a spirit like this, whose natural tendency appears to be upward, and whose wings seem ever spread for a better world, can never, on its own account, be a subject of permanent grief or compassion. *

"Should it please the Almighty to take you to himself in the midst of your days, we should be consoled by the firm belief that your departure would be as tranquil as that of a traveller, going from a strange land to his own home; and that no spirit ever passed in the confidence of a more certain faith; in the comfort of a more reasonable, religious, and holy hope; more in favour with its God, or in more perfect charity with the world.

"Farewell, respected and beloved Pastor. However distant you may be from us, we shall ever cherish the remembrance of you in our hearts. And we humbly offer our supplications to heaven, that we may be enabled to imitate the firmness of your faith, and the purity of our life; and that, when we shall have passed through this state of probation, we may meet you again in a better world, and never more to part."

POETRY.

Selected.

When I can trust my all with God.
In trial's fearful hour,
Bow, all resign'd, beneath his rod,
And bless his sparing power;
A joy springs up amid distress—
A fountain in the wilderness.

Oh! to be brought to Jesus' feet,
Though sorrows fix me there,
Is still a privilege; and sweet
The energies of prayer;
Though sighs and tears its language be,
If Christ be nigh—to smile on me!

ANON.

The billows swell, the winds are high,
Clouds overcast my wintry sky;
Out of the depths to thee I call,
My fears are great, my strength is small.

O Lord, the Pilot's part perform,
And guide and guard me through the storm;
Defend me from each threatening ill,
Control the waves, say 'peace, be still.'

Amidst the roaring of the sea,
My soul still hangs her hope on thee;
Thy constant love, thy faithful care,
Is all that saves me from despair.

COWPER.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Missionary Lecture.—The sixth was delivered at St. Stephen's Chapel, on the appointed day, the first Thursday in July. The Congregation was smaller than usual, owing not, as we trust, to a relaxation of zeal in the cause, and the amount collected was only \$14.

Episcopal Female Bible, Prayer-Book and Tract Society.—In their seventh annual report it is said, “the distributions of the past year, have not equalled those of former ones. The managers have distributed 135 bibles and testaments, 112 prayer-books, 1190 tracts. They have sold 68 bibles and testaments, 24 prayer-books. There are 32 life members, 162 annual do.; 8 having withdrawn, and 6 been added; two donations have been received. The managers have held 10 meetings. The Librarian, the Rev. Mr. Gibbes, having resigned, it was found difficult to supply his place, and the business of the Society, has in consequence been suspended for some time. The board deeply regret the necessity which compelled the above resignation, and take the opportunity of returning Mr. Gibbes, their sincere thanks for his long and faithful services.” Mrs. Eliza R. Deas, was elected to the office of Librarian.

Protestant Episcopal Society for the Advancement of Christianity in South-Carolina.—At a quarterly meeting of the Board of Trustees held on the 7th ult., the Rev. Dr. Dalcho was elected Librarian of that institution, in the place of the Rev. Mr. Gibbes, resigned; and the Rev. Dr. Gadsden, elected a member of the Book Committee, in the room of Dr. Dalcho.

Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church.—In the Record for July we read, as to the Florida mission, “the vestry of Tallahassee have this day appointed a committee to take preliminary measures: \$900 have already been subscribed. \$2000 will probably be obtained here, which indeed will be an effort most honourable to this small but spirited community; for the balance they may perhaps be obliged to appeal to the generosity of Churches more blessed with ability, a resource too often and successfully tested to be distrusted. They have selected an admirable site, and will erect a brick Church, worthy, I trust, of this important and promising metropolis.” The receipts for the month, amount to \$1046, of which from South-Carolina, \$160.

Pennsylvania.—The Convention was held May 20-22. Present the two Bishops, 35 other Clergymen and 64 of the Laity. The whole number of Clergy are 69; Candidates for orders 22, and Congregations 83. The Episcopal fund \$14,373.

In his address the Assistant Bishop says, of the consecration of the Bishop of Tennessee, “the excellent brother thus elevated came among us a stranger, and left us bearing with him the friendship and

affection of all hearts, for his great personal amiableness and worth, for his unostentatious piety, and for his sound, manly, and uncompromising churchmanship. I trust we may say to our brethren in Tennessee, as Ignatius did of Onesimus to the Church at Ephesus—"blessed be God, who has granted unto you, who are so worthy of him, to enjoy such an excellent Bishop."

He concludes thus "I have gone through with the several topics relating to ecclesiastical business that have occurred to me. One however of a different sort remains. It is the continued health, and the activity uncommon at his age, of our venerable Father in God—the centre of our affections, and of those of our whole Church. No individual perhaps on earth is personally connected with so many circumstances of deep interest. For nearly half a century he has been the living link between two Churches, the Church of England and the American Episcopal Church. For nearly three quarters of a century, he has been the living link between the successive generations of men in active life, who, at the beginning of that period, were prominent in the affairs of our Church, or have since become such. All our bishops but one, since the succession was obtained, and all our present bishops received their commission at his hands. He has been the Senior Bishop of our Church more than thirty-eight years: and he sits among his Episcopal compeers, as did St. John, surrounded by younger brethren only in the apostolic office, all the other first incumbents, and many others later in their consecration, having been removed from their earthly labours. He was the friend and pastor of Washington, and a chaplain to Congress at an early period. Once, he was the only Episcopal clergyman in Pennsylvania; now about seventy acknowledge him their diocesan. His personal character is unstained, his official character admired and venerated. Strangers ask to see him—and young children are brought into his presence, that they may be able to say, at future periods, that they have been taken by the hand by Bishop White. I am sure that the hearts of all of you, my brethren, unite with mine in the prayer, that God, will still "remember for good" his aged and faithful servant."

The following intelligence must be peculiarly gratifying to the friends of Christian education.

St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia.—A day school for girls and small boys has been established, with the sanction of the vestry, under the supervision of the clergy of the parish, acting through a committee of ladies of the congregation. The design of the institution is to connect religious instruction with a good plain secular education. The school was opened at the beginning of the year, with every prospect of proving, with the divine blessing, eminently useful in bringing up the pupils as Christians and Episcopalian. The average number of pupils is forty.

Virginia.—The Convention was held May 21-25. Present, the Assistant Bishop and several of the Clergy and Laity. The whole number of Clergy is 57. Amount of funds for widows and orphans of the Clergy, \$8761.

In his address the Assistant Bishop says, "In compliance with your request at our last Convention, I have written and circulated a pastoral letter on the very important duty of giving religious instruction to our servants. I know the difficulties of the task, but I know that both ministers and people are far too ready to magnify these difficulties, and satisfy themselves with very insufficient excuses for its neglect. If the love of immortal souls, which is the true spirit of Christ, did but reign in our hearts as it ought to do, we should be more apt to teach these, our poor ignorant fellow creatures, and less apt at finding out excuses for our neglect of them. I commit the feeble effort in their behalf to God and your consciences, hoping that it may not be altogether in vain. I have also just completed the publication of a small book of family prayers, which I trust may be an acceptable offering to God and to the Christian families under our charge. If the work shall only induce one family to worship God which has hitherto neglected it, or shall assist to the better performance of this duty one which may already have lived in the performance of this Godly practice, I shall be abundantly rewarded for any labour expended on the collection."

The following was passed: "*Resolved*, that the Assistant Bishop of this diocese, with the aid of any of the clergy or laity whom he may call to his assistance, be and is hereby requested, to prepare, from time to time, such tracts or sermons as they may deem suitable for the religious instruction of servants."

Extracts from parochial reports: *Russell Parish, Bedford*, "The Rector is also encouraged by the prospect of being useful in his preaching to the coloured people, for whose benefit he holds a second service on each Sunday. When he commenced his labours a few years ago, amongst this too much neglected people, he doubted whether they could ever be brought to be interested in the Liturgy; but he now finds from experience, that, ignorant and uneducated as they are, they may be taught to unite in a considerable portion of the worship of the Church, particularly in the General Confession, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the ante-communion service. And he is now fully convinced that one of the most direct and efficient means of building them up in the pure faith of the gospel, will be to instruct them in the forms and services of the Church. Indeed, the Rector can truly say, that he never duly appreciated the value and importance of forms of prayer, till he began his feeble labours among the coloured people." *Cumberland, Lunenburgh*, "I have paid renewed attention to the coloured people of my neighbourhood, preaching on the afternoon of every other Wednesday and Sunday with the most pleasing prospect of success. The masters of the servants feel the duty of providing for their spiritual welfare so great, that they contemplate building a Church expressly for them."

(*To be continued.*)

NEW PUBLICATION.

The Past and the Future, a charge, on events connected with the organization of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, and the lessons they inculcate: Delivered before the fiftieth Convention of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. By William White, D. D., Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.—Every thing from the pen of our Senior Bishop should command attention. His papers abound with information remarkably condensed, and some of it not to be obtained from other sources, for they who acted with him in the organization of our Church, have, we believe, without exception, passed from this earthly scene. The first sentence in this Charge, "this is the fiftieth annual convention in which your Bishop has been present and presiding in the representative body of the diocese," has led to the mistake that Bishop White has held the Episcopate for half a century. He was consecrated February 4, 1787. Previous to his being Bishop, he presided in the Conventions of Pennsylvania. It is to this fact that he here refers, and again, p. 18, where he speaks "of the half century of his agency, first in the organizing of our Church, and since in the administering of its concerns."

Remarkable facts: "In the whole history of the Christian Church, it would probably be impossible to name an instance in which there was so great a portion of population, discharged from all authority for the taking of order, tending to the improvement of their condition." * * * "It will probably be new to the greater number present, to be informed that, for a short time, he who addresses you was the only Episcopal clergyman in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and that when he was elected to the episcopacy, there were only three of his brethren present and voting. They were all who could have given clerical voices in the measure, with the exception of two brethren who were absent and resided at distances, but afterwards signified their concurrence."

Under the first head: "The first of the duties to be now mentioned, is the maintaining of the unity of the Church over the extent of union of these States," he remarks, "wherever, in any extent of territory, there is an ecclesiastical organization duly constituted and adjusted to the ordering of matters within the sphere of human jurisdiction, departure from such a body, by a portion of it, setting up an organization of their own, without ground for the charging of fundamental error in doctrine as the cause of their secession, is schism, in the scriptural sense of the word." * * * "The deliverer of these sentiments derives consolation from the fact, that neither now nor at any former period since the organization of our Church, has there been a threatening danger of the breach of her unity. But when he considers that human passions are the same in all ages, and that the history of the Christian Church abounds with evidence of the covering of ambition, and of many other evil passions, with the mantle of professed zeal for the sacred cause of religion; he has thought the present a suitable occasion for opposing to the evil, should it hereafter happen, his testimony against it."

Under the second head, viz: "It is clearly deducible from the premises, that our Church is pledged to the point of continuing to maintain the doctrines of the gospel, as held by the Church of England." * * * "We have applied to our venerable mother for the completion of the orders of our ministry; and the favour has been granted, in full faith of our continuance in the doctrines professed by her through many ages. It will always be a duty lying on us to 'look to the rock from which we were hewn;' and in obeying the scriptural admonition of 'asking for the old paths,' to trace them in the institutions, and in the history of the Church from which we are descended. In our favoured country, every individual is vested with the privilege of manifesting his religious belief, in the form of profession the most agreeable to his judgment or to his fancy. He may depart from our communion, but he ought not to remain in it to the disturbance of its peace. Even in the very improbable event of dissatisfaction with our doctrines, in the minds of the greater number of our members, however unquestionable their civil right of departure, there will remain the spiritual right of the minority to the means of public profession and worship, before common to both."

Under the third head, he says, "the third inference deducible from the facts recorded under the other branch of this charge, is the duty of sustaining the Episcopacy in whatever is appropriate to its character; and the propriety of defending

it on the ground on which it has been transmitted to us by the Church of England. When that Church reformed from popery, it was with the purpose of altering no further than wherein the existing power had departed from scriptural and from immediately succeeding times. They found that in the origin of the ministry, it comprehended three orders, the highest of which were the apostles and others whom they associated with themselves in the same supereminent trust, to be transmitted by them in perpetual succession. Concerning ministerial acts, that of ordaining in particular, they found no instance of its having been performed by a minister of inferior grade. As to any organized body, with authority to perform this act, or indeed, any other, independently on that higher grade, there is not even alleged evidence of a vestige of it. The course continued, without exception and without strife for 1500 years, and until the era of the reformation. On the continent of Europe many respectable bodies of the reformed saw no way of accomplishing their work but by dispensing with Episcopacy, partly because of there being no reforming Bishops, and partly from the subjects being much interwoven with secular interests, over which the reformers had no control. Whatever may be the measure of allowance due to exterior necessity, there did not exist any such hindrance in England; and therefore her Church availed itself of the advantage of combining ancient order with recently acquired liberty."

"These facts consistently sustain this point of the divine institution of the Episcopacy, not accommodating in the least degree, to contrary opinion. When this characteristic of our communion is lost sight of, under any specious plea of temporary accommodation to popular prejudice, instead of being conciliatory, as is imagined, it brings conflicting opinions into view to the loss of Christian charity; or, if this be not the consequence, to the sacrifice of a truth of scripture."

In this decisive manner, does this charge sustain the doctrine of Episcopacy, and warn against departure from it, or "accommodating in the least degree to the contrary opinion." Our Church undeniably holds that "the communions destitute of the Episcopacy" are in error. The degree of blame attached to the error; the effect of it upon their present and future virtue and happiness; the extenuating circumstances, whether they amount to justification, or have no weight are points not touched by any public acts or formularies of our Church. She rests satisfied with declaring the truth, without pursuing it to its consequences, and in the didactic not the controversial or polemic manner. The Charge recommends each member in his individual capacity to pursue the mild yet decided course of the Church, to leave those who are without her pale to be judged by him who alone knows the motive, and all the circumstances, to whom alone each man is accountable. She denounces not the non-episcopalians; she believes that they have departed from an article of the Christian faith, but she is silent as to the question whether this article be an essential or a non-essential, a fundamental or non-fundamental. (Indeed does the Church ever draw the line which some Christians undertake to do between fundamental and non-fundamental, essential and non-essential?) She does not pronounce, (as some Episcopalians have done) that the non-Episcopalian is "alien from the covenants of promise." Now our good Bishop advises each member to pursue the decided yet tolerant course of his Church, to hold and to declare the truth firmly, but not to pass sentence upon the non-episcopalians; not to denounce him, not to pronounce his error, "a departing from the essentials of the Christian faith," not to pronounce him, "alien from the covenants of promise." He goes on to say, "in her articles and her liturgy there has been regarded the precise medium here advocated." He quotes Archbishop Wake as herein imitating his Church, by refusing to pronounce that they, (non-episcopalians,) have no "valid sacraments and are scarcely Christian," and Richard Hooker as lamenting their imperfection, and setting forth extenuating circumstances in apology for it, while he carefully abstains from any denunciation or declaration as to the character of this imperfection, whether it be an essential or a non-essential error, and what degree of blame, more or less it involves. The Charge after these cautions reverts to its original position, the obligation of holding the truth resolutely, but yet in love, saying, "there can be nothing more evident, than that in proportion to the claim of our Church to apostolic origin, is the duty induced by that circumstance on her members generally, and on her ministers especially, to sustain it." We have dwelt on this part of the Charge, because we think the Bishop has been misunderstood by a writer signed M. in "the Churchman," who heads his article thus, "Episcopacy not an essential of the Christian faith in the

opinion of Bishop White." The Bishop gives no such opinion in *this Charge*. He only advises to give no decision in the premises; to leave the question open as the Church has left it, on the one hand not to say Episcopacy is essential, nor on the other hand, not to say it is non-essential. It is sufficient to maintain that it is an article of the Christian faith, but whether essential or non-essential, this deponent saith not.

It is true, as M. states, the Church of England does not *deny* the validity of a non-episcopal ministry but neither does she *admit* it. She is silent on this question. True she does not *deny* the validity of a non-episcopal ministry, but she does not call such denial "an extreme opinion," any more than she calls the *admitting* of this validity an extreme opinion. As she is silent on the point, she cannot have said that there is any extreme opinion in either alternative. True, the denial of a non-episcopal ministry is not the determination of the Church, but neither is the admitting of this validity such a determination, and we must be careful not to obtrude either the one or the other opinion on the Church in a case where she chooses to be silent. This case is analogous to a recent decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. The question was as to the validity of baptism by a Roman Catholic minister, the Assembly did not pronounce it valid neither did they pronounce it invalid, they took a third course, viz: declining to express their sense on the subject. Did this silence on their part imply that they held such a baptism to be valid? Certainly not. Neither does the silence of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as to the validity of non episcopal ministrations, imply an *admission* of their validity. In short, our Church says, "it is evident unto all men, diligently reading holy scripture and ancient authors, that from the apostles' times, there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." Such is her opinion plainly expressed. Then follows her rule for the government of her own members, "no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said functions except he hath had Episcopal consecration or ordination." She does not go on to declare her opinion as to a Church which has not these three orders of ministers, whether it be indeed, a Church of Christ or not; neither does she claim obedience to her rules from any not of "this Church," that is of non-episcopalians. In like manner, Bishop White asserts the doctrine of Episcopacy, abstains from any expression of opinion, as to those who deny it, calls upon his own flock to maintain the said doctrine, and of course, gives no admonition to those not of his flock. He recommends his people while they hold Episcopacy as a scriptural doctrine, and act upon that faith, not to *denounce* those who reject this doctrine, but in charity to hope that their error is of the head, not of the heart. The assertion of a discrepancy between this Charge, and another of one of our Bishops is a mistake. Even if the Bishop last referred to denied the validity of non-episcopal ministrations, he did not contradict Bishop White, for where has Bishop W. admitted this validity? If the one Bishop has asserted the invalidity of non-episcopal ministrations, the other was silent on the point, only declined to give an opinion. Where is any contradiction here? Bishop White speaks after the mild manner of Bishop Hall, who on this doctrine of Episcopacy says, "I cannot depreciate a truth though with all modesty and fair respects to the Churches differing from me."

Under the fourth and last head, viz: "Our origin in the Church of England directs our view to our adherence, in substance, to those services and those forms which have come down to us from her reformers, in the Book of Common Prayer;" we have these wise suggestions, as to the alteration of the Prayer Book, "he takes occasion to record his opinion concerning the form in which the measure should be conducted, if it should be resolved on. Let a committee of Bishops be chosen by the House of Bishops, and another of Presbyters, by the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies. Let this combined committee assemble at some place convenient for the consultation of books. Let them maturely, and not without continued prayer, devote themselves to the work. And when it is prepared, let there be a call of the General Convention the revised liturgy to be received or rejected by them, without debate. This plan will resemble, as nearly as difference of circumstances permits, the form in which the English Book of Common Prayer was prepared and adopted; and we know the duration of it. As to conventional reviews, they will be always liable to so much haste, to so much heat and pertinacity of opinion, generated by opposition; and added to all, defect of theological learning in no small a proportion of the reviewers, that in the estimation of your

Bishop there is little likelihood of their being either judicious or stable." On the advantages of our Service Book, we have these striking remarks: "Besides its usefulness as a form of public worship, we have abundant evidence of its being blessed to the exciting of devotion in families and in individuals. When, during the revolutionary war, very many districts of our country had become deprived of the means of grace: in some of them, devotion was kept alive in domestic circles, by their possession of books of Common Prayer; so that when after the lapse of many years, a Christian ministry became restored to them, the intervening privation had not obliterated the instruction of preceding times. Neither ought we to be regardless of the fact, that in many a case of a life spent in utter forgetfulness of God, and perhaps in gross sin, the recollection of the devotions of the book in question, has been the means of repentance and reformation.

"For these reasons the Book of Common Prayer ought to be considered as an important adjunct in our missionary efforts, both foreign and domestic. By its incitements to devotion, and by its helps in it, the cause may be aided in places in which the iteracy of the missionary will not permit him to remain. Even in the cases of a reasonable proportion of settled pastors, their flocks are generally so extended in their several places of residence, as that it is difficult to command personal aid at the times of unexpected sickness, or of the happening of any extraordinary calamity, when there would be peculiar propriety in the application for religious counsel. Far from the present intention be the dispensing with ministerial aid, in the extent to which it can be carried by the zeal and by the active labours of the minister. But their being physical limits, beyond which his agency cannot be extended, it is no small relief of the wants to which he should be ever ready to contribute his succour, that they may at least in some degree be met by the compilation, which comprehends counsels suited to all states of mind, and devotions expressive of any desires, of which present circumstances ought to be the mean of excitement. Even in regard to biblical instruction, the select portions of the book of Holy Scriptures included in the Book of Common Prayer, are a digest of all their leading truths. Let not the remark be understood as dispensing with the possession of the whole volume. On the contrary, let it be deposited in every hand. But the Gospels incorporated in our service for the Communion, and there founded on all the relations to us sustained by the Saviour in the plenitude of his character, are such as to present an epitome of the truths comprehended in it; at the same time that in the Epistles there are embodied precepts accommodated to all the circumstances in which we can stand.

"It is no small commendation of the Epistles and Gospels that having been in use in the Church before the introduction of the worst of the errors of popery, they became a considerable counterbalance to the evil of concealing the volume of inspiration from the people, under the cover of a dead language, and under the interdict of general perusal. The passages referred to were in all hands; and although in the Latin tongue, became known to a considerable proportion of the population. It would be easy to swell this commendation of the Book of Common Prayer, from writers of various denominations, who have felt the want of such a help to popular devotion among themselves."

In the conclusion of the Charge the Bishop adverts to the existing crisis in the Church of England, and solicits "an interest for her in the prayers of all present, especially of the clergy." He gives this seasonable hint to the Laity, "It has happened in some instances, that too great laxity in regard to its peculiar characteristics, in men who had promised adherence to them in ordination, has received profitable checks from the remonstrances of those who were not under obligations accompanied by such solemnity, but were more faithful to their profession; and further whose attainments have caused reaction, in minds led astray by the love of novelty, or by some other unworthy passion. When there occurs a proper cause of such interference, no false delicacy should have greater weight than the interest of truth, sustained with good temper and with decorum." Another good hint to all concerned: "It will not be unseasonable to remark further to the lay members of this body, that perhaps there is no point on which they may more efficiently contribute to all the uses of the gospel ministry, than by checking the causes of so many changes of ministerial residence as are displayed annually on our journals. Of the resulting evils it is not the least, that there is encouraged the not taking due care in the choice of a Pastor, when the severance of the connexion is so familiarized by habit."

opinion of Bishop White." The Bishop gives no such opinion in *this Charge*. He only advises to give no decision in the premises; to leave the question open as the Church has left it, on the one hand not to say Episcopacy is essential, nor on the other hand, not to say it is non-essential. It is sufficient to maintain that it is an article of the Christian faith, but whether essential or non-essential, this deponent saith not.

It is true, as M. states, the Church of England does not *deny* the validity of a non-episcopal ministry but neither does she *admit* it. She is silent on this question. True she does not *deny* the validity of a non-episcopal ministry, but she does not call such denial "an extreme opinion," any more than she calls the *admitting* of this validity an extreme opinion. As she is silent on the point, she cannot have said that there is any extreme opinion in either alternative. True, the denial of a non-episcopal ministry is not the determination of the Church, but neither is the admitting of this validity such a determination, and we must be careful not to obtrude either the one or the other opinion on the Church in a case where she chooses to be silent. This case is analogous to a recent decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. The question was as to the validity of baptism by a Roman Catholic minister, the Assembly did not pronounce it valid neither did they pronounce it invalid, they took a third course, viz: declining to express their sense on the subject. Did this silence on their part imply that they held such a baptism to be valid? Certainly not. Neither does the silence of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as to the validity of non-episcopal ministrations, imply an *admission* of their validity. In short, our Church says, "it is evident unto all men, diligently reading holy scripture and ancient authors, that from the apostles' times, there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." Such is her opinion plainly expressed. Then follows her rule for the government of her own members, "no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said functions except he hath had Episcopal consecration or ordination." She does not go on to declare her opinion as to a Church which has not these three orders of ministers, whether it be indeed, a Church of Christ or not; neither does she claim obedience to her rules from any not of "this Church," that is of non-episcopalian. In like manner, Bishop White asserts the doctrine of Episcopacy, abstains from any expression of opinion, as to those who deny it, calls upon his own flock to maintain the said doctrine, and of course, gives no admonition to those not of his flock. He recommends his people while they hold Episcopacy as a scriptural doctrine, and act upon that faith, not to *denounce* those who reject this doctrine, but in charity to hope that their error is of the head, not of the heart. The assertion of a discrepancy between this Charge, and another of one of our Bishops is a mistake. Even if the Bishop last referred to denied the validity of non-episcopal ministrations, he did not contradict Bishop White, for where has Bishop W. admitted this validity? If the one Bishop has asserted the invalidity of non-episcopal ministrations, the other was silent on the point, only declined to give an opinion. Where is any contradiction here? Bishop White speaks after the mild manner of Bishop Hall, who on this doctrine of Episcopacy says, "I cannot depreciate a truth though with all modesty and fair respects to the Churches differing from me."

Under the fourth and last head, viz: "Our origin in the Church of England directs our view to our adherence, in substance, to those services and those forms which have come down to us from her reformers, in the Book of Common Prayer;" we have these wise suggestions, as to the alteration of the Prayer Book, "he takes occasion to record his opinion concerning the form in which the measure should be conducted, if it should be resolved on. Let a committee of Bishops be chosen by the House of Bishops, and another of Presbyters, by the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies. Let this combined committee assemble at some place convenient for the consultation of books. Let them maturely, and not without continued prayer, devote themselves to the work. And when it is prepared, let there be a call of the General Convention the revised liturgy to be received or rejected by them, without debate. This plan will resemble, as nearly as difference of circumstances permits, the form in which the English Book of Common Prayer was prepared and adopted; and we know the duration of it. As to conventional reviews, they will be always liable to so much haste, to so much heat and pertinacity of opinion, generated by opposition; and added to all, defect of theological learning in no small a proportion of the reviewers, that in the estimation of your

Bishop there is little likelihood of their being either judicious or stable." On the advantages of our Service Book, we have these striking remarks: "Besides its usefulness as a form of public worship, we have abundant evidence of its being blessed to the exciting of devotion in families and in individuals. When, during the revolutionary war, very many districts of our country had become deprived of the means of grace: in some of them, devotion was kept alive in domestic circles, by their possession of books of Common Prayer; so that when after the lapse of many years, a Christian ministry became restored to them, the intervening privation had not obliterated the instruction of preceding times. Neither ought we to be regardless of the fact, that in many a case of a life spent in utter forgetfulness of God, and perhaps in gross sin, the recollection of the devotions of the book in question, has been the means of repentance and reformation.

"For these reasons the Book of Common Prayer ought to be considered as an important adjunct in our missionary efforts, both foreign and domestic. By its incitements to devotion, and by its helps in it, the cause may be aided in places in which the itinerary of the missionary will not permit him to remain. Even in the cases of a reasonable proportion of settled pastors, their flocks are generally so extended in their several places of residence, as that it is difficult to command personal aid at the times of unexpected sickness, or of the happening of any extraordinary calamity, when there would be peculiar propriety in the application for religious counsel. Far from the present intention be the dispensing with ministerial aid, in the extent to which it can be carried by the zeal and by the active labours of the minister. But their being physical limits, beyond which his agency cannot be extended, it is no small relief of the wants to which he should be ever ready to contribute his succour, that they may at least in some degree be met by the compilation, which comprehends counsels suited to all states of mind, and devotions expressive of any desires, of which present circumstances ought to be the mean of excitement. Even in regard to biblical instruction, the select portions of the book of Holy Scriptures included in the Book of Common Prayer, are a digest of all their leading truths. Let not the remark be understood as dispensing with the possession of the whole volume. On the contrary, let it be deposited in every hand. But the Gospels incorporated in our service for the Communion, and there founded on all the relations to us sustained by the Saviour in the plenitude of his character, are such as to present an epitome of the truths comprehended in it; at the same time that in the Epistles there are embodied precepts accommodated to all the circumstances in which we can stand.

"It is no small commendation of the Epistles and Gospels that having been in use in the Church before the introduction of the worst of the errors of popery, they became a considerable counterbalance to the evil of concealing the volume of inspiration from the people, under the cover of a dead language, and under the interdict of general perusal. The passages referred to were in all hands; and although in the Latin tongue, became known to a considerable proportion of the population. It would be easy to swell this commendation of the Book of Common Prayer, from writers of various denominations, who have felt the want of such a help to popular devotion among themselves."

In the conclusion of the Charge the Bishop adverts to the existing crisis in the Church of England, and solicits "an interest for her in the prayers of all present, especially of the clergy." He gives this seasonable hint to the Laity, "It has happened in some instances, that too great laxity in regard to its peculiar characteristics, in men who had promised adherence to them in ordination, has received profitable checks from the remonstrances of those who were not under obligations accompanied by such solemnity, but were more faithful to their profession; and further whose attainments have caused reaction, in minds led astray by the love of novelty, or by some other unworthy passion. When there occurs a proper cause of such interference, no false delicacy should have greater weight than the interest of truth, sustained with good temper and with decorum." Another good hint to all concerned: "It will not be unseasonable to remark further to the lay members of this body, that perhaps there is no point on which they may more efficiently contribute to all the uses of the gospel ministry, than by checking the causes of so many changes of ministerial residence as are displayed annually on our journals. Of the resulting evils it is not the least, that there is encouraged the not taking due care in the choice of a Pastor, when the severance of the connexion is so familiarized by habit."

It has been asked in "the Churchman," does any one deny that the three separate propositions of M., were fairly deduced from the extract made from Bishop White? I reply, I do deny that the proposition which makes Bishop White to admit the validity of non-episcopal ministrations, is fairly deduced, for he does not so admit. He only declines to deny the validity in question, that is, he gives no opinion on the controverted point. In the same paper it is said, "that communions wanting the Episcopacy, but correct in the faith, have valid sacraments, is the private opinion of Bishop White." It may be so, but he has expressed no such opinion in the Charge before us. He only says, adopting Bishop Wake's language, "far from me be such an obdurate heart as to pronounce that they have no valid sacraments." To decline pronouncing, is not to affirm the contrary. It is no more than saying "non nobis tantas lites componem." Nevertheless in a work republished in 1833, Bishop White thus decisively speaks: "since the apostles did found a communion, and since it did confessedly transmit its ministeries, there seems no possible right to the name of a Christian Church at present, but in succession from the originally established body."—*Commentaries on Ordination*, p. 19.

Parish Library of St. Philip's Church.

The Librarian reports the following donations to the Library:

By the Gregory Society of St. Philip's Church.—4 Numbers of the *Churchman*.
By Mr. John Clarkson.—The eighteenth Annual Report of the Auxiliary New-York Bible and Common Prayer Book Society, 1833.

EPISCOPAL ACTS. ORDINATIONS.

By the Right Rev. Dr. Bowen, Bishop of the Diocese of South-Carolina.—On Sunday, July 13, 1834, in St. Michael's Church, Charleston, the Rev. Peter J. Shand, Deacon, was admitted into the Holy Order of Priests.

By the Right Rev. Dr. B. T. Onderdonk, Bishop of the Diocese of New-York.—On Sunday, June 29, 1834, in St. Thomas' Church, N. Y., Peter S. Chauncy, Edmund Embury, Henry Lockwood, Edward N. Mead, John F. Messenger, Nathan W. Munroe, Henry Tullidge, Marshall Whiting; and also Robert L. Goldsborough, of Maryland, at the request, and on behalf of the Bishop, were severally admitted into the Holy Order of Deacons. The Rev. John Dowdney, Deacon, was admitted into the Holy Order of Priests; and on Sunday July 6, in St. Andrew's Church, N. Y. the Rev. Abram B. Hart, Deacon, was admitted into the same Holy Order.

By the Right Rev. Dr. Brownell, Bishop of the Diocese of Connecticut.—On Sunday, June 29, 1834, in St. Thomas' Church, N. Y. Nathaniel E. Cornwall, and Augustus F. Lyde, of Connecticut, were admitted to the Holy Order of Deacons. On Sunday June 15, in Trinity Church, Chatham, Conn. Mr. John H. Rouse, was admitted into the Holy Order of Deacons, and on Tuesday, July 1, 1834, in St. Paul's Chapel, New Haven, Mr. Lorenzo Bennett, was admitted into the same Holy Order.

By the Right Rev. Dr. Griswold, Bishop of the Eastern Diocese.—On Tuesday, June 10, 1834, in Grace Church, Providence, R. I. Messrs. George Burgess, and — Pratt, were admitted into the Holy Order of Deacons.

CONSECRATION OF CHURCHES.

By the Right Rev. Dr. Griswold Bishop of the Eastern Diocese.—Zion's Church, Newport, R. I. June 13, 1834.

By the Right Rev. Dr. Smith, Bishop of the Diocese of Kentucky.—Christ Church, St. Louis, May 25, 1834.

By the Right Rev. Dr. B. T. Onderdonk, Bishop of the Diocese of New-York.—Mission Church of the Epiphany, June 28, 1834.

By the Right Rev. Dr. Brownell, Bishop of the Diocese of Connecticut.—Christ Church, Middletown, June 12, 1834.

CALENDAR FOR AUGUST.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 3. <i>Tenth Sunday after Trinity.</i>
10. <i>Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.</i>
17. <i>Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.</i> | 24. <i>Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity,
and St. Bartholomew.</i>
31. <i>Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.</i> |
|--|---|